

Introduced by: Councilmember Austin-Lane

Resolution 2005-59

**Resolution in Opposition to the Joint Development Sales Agreement
Entered Into by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
and Takoma Metro Associates Limited Partnership for the Sale and Development
of Open Space Located at the Takoma Metro Station**

WHEREAS, on June 20, 2005 the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (“WMATA”) and the Takoma Metro Associates Limited Partnership signed a Joint Development Sales Agreement (the “Contract”) for the sale and development of open space located at the Takoma Metro Station; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has obtained and reviewed the Contract and its conceptual Site Plan (“site plan”), which is incorporated into the Contract; and

WHEREAS, the Contract and site plan reveal that the proposed development would not include a means of entrance and egress for buses on Eastern Avenue, even though Montgomery County’s Ride-On officials have said that such access must be retained in order for current bus service at the Takoma Metro Station to be feasible, affordable and less-polluting; and

WHEREAS, the site plan and Contract provide for only ten bus bays, the space available for buses to idle on site would be significantly reduced from the amount of space currently available, and the area allocated for bus use would contain no room for future expansion; and

WHEREAS, the site plan and Contract call for a reduction in the number of available parking spaces to approximately half of the spaces currently available, with no plans to replace the lost public parking although this lot is frequently at capacity; and

WHEREAS, the site plan shows that the ease of pedestrian access to the Metro Station from the East would be significantly reduced because the configuration of housing units creates alleys and cul-de-sacs blocking current footpaths to the Station; and

WHEREAS, the site plan shows that handicapped users and those with strollers or bicycles would have to cross two lanes of bus traffic to reach the elevator entrance; and

WHEREAS, the site plan reduces the space available for bicycle parking and storage at the station, even as the Metropolitan Branch Trail is poised to create significant additional bicycle traffic to and from the Takoma Metro; and

WHEREAS, the site plan does not currently address compensating improvements to transit access, such as the western entrance to the elevator or to Fourth Street recommended by the Takoma Central District Plan, a component of the DC Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, overall the proposed combination of high density, less community parking, impaired bus access, pedestrian blockages, bicycle storage losses and handicapped access impairment are inconsistent with the recommendations of the Takoma Central District Plan that “Redevelopment planning must recognize that the primary function of the Metro station site is to provide transit services. Secondary functions accommodating the needs of the local business community or potential new development must be designed in a manner to support current and future transit needs at the station;” and

WHEREAS, the proposed project reduces and does not enhance the effectiveness of the community’s mass transit facilities and reduces coordination between mass transportation and other transportation modes, contrary to the requirements of the Federal Transit Administration’s (“FTA”) joint development guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project would further reduce levels of service in failing adjacent intersections and increase traffic congestion; and

WHEREAS, the transit needs of Takoma Park, Maryland could be significantly and negatively affected by the proposed development if it goes forward as proposed in the Contract and site plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park invested in a joint transportation study with the District of Columbia, the 2003 Takoma Transportation Study, in which recommendations were made to address many community transit concerns; and

WHEREAS, the FTA must approve the final sale of this property for development and can do so only if the proposed development meets federal standards for Transit Oriented Development; and

WHEREAS, WMATA officials submitted their request on July 14, 2005 for federal approval of the sale.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND THAT the City Council opposes the reconfiguration of the Takoma Metro Station site in any way which reduces, rather than enhances, Takoma Park’s transit options and opportunities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City of Takoma Park calls upon the Federal Transit Administration to deny its approval of the proposed sale, as currently configured, as contrary to the requirement that the transaction promote transit-oriented development; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City of Takoma Park calls upon the Montgomery County Council, its state and federal elected officials, and the Federal Transit Administration to assist Takoma Park in ensuring that the FTA, WMATA and the District of Columbia properly consider the impacts of development at the Takoma Metro Station on the City of Takoma Park and its residents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council urges implementation of the recommendations of the 2003 Takoma Transportation Study as it pertains to the WMATA project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council instructs the City Manager to make this a high priority immediately and assign adequate staff and other resources to protect Takoma Park's interests as detailed above.

Adopted this 18th day of July, 2005.

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter
City Clerk